

From the Upper Chamber



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Report for Wednesday, January 25, 2006

The eighth day of the 2006 legislative session was called to order by Lieutenant Governor **Mark Taylor**.

Senator **Don Balfour** of the 9th stated that the journal had been read and was found to be correct.

Senate Bills 447-454, Senate Resolution 718 and House Bills 344, 357, 660, 749, 804, 901, 902, 973 and 1003 were read for the first time and assigned to their respective Committees.

Following the second reading of Senate Bills and Resolutions, the morning roll call was taken.

Lt. Gov. **Taylor** then recognized Sen. **Balfour** to lead the Senate in the Pledge of Allegiance. Sen. **Balfour** introduced the *Chaplain of the Day*, Pastor **John Colbaugh** of Lawrenceville Church of God, who led the Senate in the daily devotional.

Sen. **Valencia Seay** of the 34th took the well on a Point of Personal Privilege to speak to SB 382, and to current child support issues in Georgia.

Minority Leader **Robert Brown** of the 26th took the well on a Point of Personal Privilege to speak to yesterday's debate on voter identification. Sen. **Brown** stated that the costs of implementing a statewide voter ID program would be great.

SR 704-717, 719 and 720 were read and adopted.

Lt. Gov. **Taylor** then introduced the *Doctor of the Day*, Dr. **Steven Muller** of Jonesboro, who greeted the Senate from the rostrum.

The Secretary then read SR 649, which congratulates the Court of Appeals of Georgia on its 100th anniversary.

President Pro Tempore **Eric Johnson** of the 1st took the well to present the resolution and a Committee Amendment, which makes a minor language change.

The Committee Amendment was adopted by a vote of 43-0.

SR 649 was adopted as amended by a vote of 51-0.

The Secretary read SR 721, and Sen. **John Wiles** of the 37th took the rostrum to recognize two Cobb County youth councils present in the Senate gallery.

The Secretary then read SB 382, which changes the calculations, definitions and provisions of child support law, and its accompanying amendments.

Sen. **Seth Harp** of the 29th took the well to present the bill, and to speak to the amendments. He stated that SB 382 had received the approval of the Georgia Child Support Commission. Sen. **Harp** also stated that SB 382 is more concise than the child support legislation (HB 221) that passed last session. He yielded to questions from Senators **David Shafer** of the 48th, **Renee Unterman** of the 45th, **Steen Miles** of the 43rd and **Gloria Butler** of the 55th.

Sen. **Steve Thompson** of the 33rd took the well to speak to SB 382, and to present Amendment 3. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Harp**.

Sen. **Regina Thomas** of the 2nd took the well to present Amendment 1, which would change language in the bill concerning the calculation of child support payments. She yielded to questions from Sen. **Steve Henson** of the 41st.

Sen. **Miles** took the well to present Amendment 2, which would add language to the bill on the child support payment equation.

The Secretary then read Amendments 5, 6 and 7.

Sen. **J.B. Powell** of the 23rd took the well to present Amendments 4 and 5, which would strengthen state laws against child abandonment. He yielded to question from Sens. **Harp**, **Brian Kemp** of the 46th, **Unterman** and **Shafer**.

Sen. **Unterman** took the well to present Amendment 6, which would change the bill's language concerning "parenting time." She yielded to questions from Sen. **Henson**.

Sens. **Butler** and **Seay** took the well to speak in support of Amendment 6.

Lt. Gov. **Taylor** then paused to recognize Sen. **Mitch Seabaugh** of the 28th, who took the rostrum to welcome U.S. Congressman **Lynn Westmoreland** to the Senate chamber.

The Secretary read Amendment 8, and Sen. **Thompson** of the 33rd took the well to present the Amendment. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Unterman**.

Sen. **David Adelman** of the 42nd took the well to speak in favor of Amendment 6.

Sen. **Harp** took the well to conclude the debate on SB 382. He urged the Senate to vote no on Amendments 1-6 and 8, and to vote yes on Amendment 7. He yielded to questions from Sens. **Thompson** of the 33rd, **Seabaugh** and **Balfour**.

Sen. **Thompson** of the 33rd took the well to again urge support for Amendment 8.

Sen. **Powell** moved to withdraw Amendments 4 and 5, and there was no objection.

President Pro Tem **Johnson** took the well to applaud Sen. **Powell**'s motion to withdraw the child abandonment amendments. Sen. **Johnson** stated that the Senate would take up separate child abandonment legislation at a later date.

Sen. **Thompson** of the 33rd moved to withdraw Amendment 3, and there was no objection.

Amendment 1 failed by a vote of 16-38.

Amendment 2 failed by a vote of 25-30.

Amendment 6 was adopted by a vote of 49-6.

Amendment 7 was adopted by a vote of 54-0.

Amendment 8 failed by a vote of 21-34.

SB 382 passed as amended by a vote of 38-17.

Sen. **John Douglas** of the 17th took the well to recognize members of the Newton County Homebuilders Association, who were present in the Senate gallery.

Following the announcements, Majority Leader **Tommie Williams** of the 19th moved that upon the dissolution of the joint session of the House and Senate to hear the State of the Judiciary from Chief Justice **Leah Ward Sears** the Senate stand adjourned until 10:00 a.m., Thursday, January 26.

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